

TOOT is the official journal of Potomac Valley Skiers, a non-profit organization primarily devoted to furthering active interest in skiing.

In TOOT's book of important dates, February is listed as the Month of the Snowflake. PVSers like February because for many members it is the month of the "big trip" -- out West, to Europe, or to New England. PVSers also like February because during this month the snow is usually better and there is (sometimes) more of it. Because in February we really THINK SNOW (the time for a SNO-BALL!), TOOT feels it appropriate this February to pay tribute to "Snowflake" Bentley (Wilson Alwyn Bentley - 1865 - 1931), an obscure Vermont farmer who spent the better part of a lifetime studying and documenting with micro photographs and sketches one of nature's most simple yet very complicated winter phenomena: the common snowflake. Bentley's "gallery" of snow crystals and snowflakes of various shapes and sizes numbers over 2000 specimens gathered over a period of thirty years. Nancy Monacelli has captured for us some of the pictorial flavor of Bentley's work in an array of actual snowflake photo enlargements which we reproduced as TOOT's February cover. There are extra copies.

Bentley or no Bentley, the fact is that TOOT and probably most PVSers have been "thinking snow" for the last three weeks but the warm southerly winds that churn up the shrimp beds in the Gulf of Mexico have not been kind to local skiing. But up north, out west, and in the Alps and Carpathians, it is a little different. In Vermont it has been alternately wet and dry but fair skiing conditions prevail in most areas, even good to excellent at the higher elevations. Jackson Hole, Aspen and Vail, as usual this time of year, boast deep, deep powder with more on the way. Grenoble Winter Olympians, on the other hand, would like to see some better snow but in Grindelwald, Zurs and Zermatt, we are told it's "sehr gut." As for East Europe's Zakopane, Karlove Vary and Predeal, we have only this cryptic report: "Pana acuma, cantitata zapadei este minimala."

As if you didn't know, Skier magazine (January issue) features PVS as the "Ski Club of the Month." Anne Cooper (no other but our good friend Anne Schaffer at WBAL in Baltimore) painted PVS brightly: a small but successful new ski club, 100% USEASA, wholesomely devoted to the sport of skiing, and so on. Anne calls us a club of "skiing enthusiasts" which of course we are, or at least want to be. We are very grateful to Anne for all her kindnesses. Perhaps we don't deserve all of Anne's plaudits but then only you, fellow PVSer, can really judge. If Anne covered up any gaps, please help fill them this year by full participation in PVS activities.

The Denver Post recently (January 2) carried a full page pictorial special on Snowmass-at-Aspen, the newest Janns Corporation ski venture. This new ski complex consists of 6300 acres of mountain slopes, 50 miles of trails, and six double chair lifts with a capacity of 5200 skiers an hour. Trails descend 3600 feet from timberline at 11,800 feet. Average annual snowfall is 300 inches at the top, 155 inches at the base. Phase one of the Snowmass development is West Village with 5 lodges accommodating 1000 persons, 120 condominiums, 21 shops, a banquet hall and a theatre. West Village is described as the "total resort."

The January 16 PVS MEETING ON SKIS at Charnita was fine, fine, fine. About 30 members and guests came out for this arc lit, starlight event. They either competed in the Slalom Race, took the Basic Test, or just stood around and cheered the action faction of the Club. The racing and lodge arrangements were handled by Bruce Harstad and Mike Rura. The slalom course was set by Luis Sanchez, Charnita's Ski School Director, with Bruce Harstad and Hank Thomas assisting. Charlie Gordon, Jodie Cowell, Larry Pease, Buff Harris, Peggy Lacey, and many others gave Bruce Harstad all kinds of good assistance and he is thankful. Winner of the Men's Slalom event was Buff Harris who did the tricky course in 25.7 seconds. Bill Johnson and Larry Pease followed with 30.3 and 30.5 seconds to take second and third places. Penny Sayre outdid the women's field with a flashy 32.9 seconds to take first place. Second and third went to Pat Calef (39 seconds) and Aina Hertelis (40.4 seconds). After the skiing, PVSers gathered in the Charnita lodge where, over refreshments, Brooke Armat presided over a short meeting at which Meg Anderson and Mac Ferguson were voted into PVS as full fledged members.

So successful was the PVS MEETING ON SKIS in January that we are doing it again this month. The event will take place again at Charnita (it is close by) and the date is Tuesday, February 20th, 7 p.m. The Basic Test will be given again. There will also be a fun race and in this and other PVS ski events Bruce Harstad wants a few more women competitors. Guests are welcome, of course. In fact, you are expected to bring one or two. At this meeting Bruce will award six trophies to the first, second and third place winners of both the men's and women's slalom events of January 16. Everybody knows how to get to Charnita. Take 70S from the Beltway, connect with Route 15 at Frederick, then turn left at Emmitsburg, and follow the signs. See you at Charnita, February 20, 7 p.m.

IMPORTANT IMPORTANT IMPORTANT IMPORTANT

A new PVS officer slate (President and three Executive Committee members will be chosen at the April meeting. The Nominating Committee (Bill Stecher, Chairman, Jack Lilley, Pat Calef, Billie Pease, Charlie Gordon, Hank Thomas and Brooke Armat) has selected the following roster of new officer candidates on which PVS members will vote at the April meeting:

Larry Pease - President
Hank Thomas - Executive Committee member (second term)
Aina Hertelis - Executive Committee member
Max Bunnell - Executive Committee member

The last three or any other three chosen at the April meeting will replace Mike Rura, Brooke Armat and Hank Thomas whose terms in ExCom expire in April. The list of candidates chosen by the Nominating Committee is not exclusive. Any member (or members) can advance additional candidates for PVS office by following the procedure for nominations spelled out in Section H of the By-Laws. This Section reads as follows:

"H. Nominating Committee: The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee Chairman and a Committee of no less than five (5) members, at least three (3) months prior to the election date, which Committee shall place in nomination names of officers at a business meeting not later than two (2) months prior to the election. A copy of said slate shall be sent upon completion to every active member of the Club. Additional nominations may be made by signature of any five (5) members in good standing and must be presented at a business meeting at least one (1) month prior to the election."

In keeping with Section I of the By-Laws, all nominees must agree to serve if elected.

The USSA Uniform Basic Test was given twice in January (1968) by PVS members: by Packard Anderson at Skyline on January 6 when Mac Ferguson took the test and passed with flying colors; and by Bill Goodell at Charnita on January 16 during the PVS "MEETING ON SKIS." At the latter meeting, Goodell, our Testing Chairman, put three members (Brooke Armat, Jack Lilley, Max Bunnell) and two guests (Don Cope and Eve Osteen) through the test and all came out successfully. TOOT congratulates the participants and thanks the judges for this demonstrated effort to achieve the PVS ideal of "every member a skier." And as a reminder, you can take the Basic Test at the next PVS MEETING ON SKIS, on February 20, 7 p.m., at the Charnita Ski Area.

Heading West (to ski, naturally) in February are Nancy Monacelli, Susan Clark, Pat Calef, Brooke Armat, Jack Lilley, Ron Fett and Max Bunnell. Already in Europe for a ski holiday are Elke and Bill Stecher (Arosa) and Billie and Larry Pease. Have we missed anybody?

TOOT is advised that the Washington Daily News (February 1) carried a short but informative article on the PVS organization and activities.

The new PVS bumper sticker is just off the press: black letters on a luminous light green background, weather resistant paper, with lots of good water-proof stickum. Ask for yours at the next meeting.

For better or for worse, your Editor has been sounding the little PVS horn (TOOT, of course) for just over two years. A pleasant task it always has been, thanks to help from all sides. But the Pennsylvania hills (and four bouncy kids) beckon hard and when Spring comes we plan, more often than not, to fix our compass for points dead north. And so we surrender the editorial pen feeling confident that TOOT is now on solid footing and that the little bugle will continue to blow loud and clear, especially if the membership gives it plenty to sound off about. To all PVS members, many thanks for all the help and sustained interest.

Mike Rura